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RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA IMMEDIATE 0076

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRATISLAVA 000459

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/17/2012

TAGS: [KV](#) [VI](#) [UN](#) [PGOV](#) [EU](#) [PREL](#) [LO](#)

SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA STILL LEERY OF MOVING TOO FAST ON KOSOVO

REF: A. STATE 109526

[¶](#)B. BRATISLAVA 368

Classified By: CDA Lawrence R. Silverman for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[¶1.](#) (C) Summary. PolEcon Chief, accompanied by Poloff, delivered Ref A points to Ivan Lancaric, Head of the UNSC Coordination Unit at MFA, on August 9. PolEcon Chief followed up with Stefan Rozkopal, Director of CIS and Balkan Peninsula Countries on August 13. Although the tone and emphasis -- and indeed, sometimes the substance -- of Lancaric's and Rozkopal's responses were notably different, neither deviated from the standard Slovak position on the need for a UNSCR-based resolution to Kosovo. However, while Lancaric's primarily negative comments focused on perceived passed missteps in the process, Rozkopal characterized the last UNSCR on Kosovo as a "good" one, and pondered how Russian participation in the Troika might inject some realism into its approach. End Summary.

[¶2.](#) (C) In an August 9 meeting, Lancaric regretted that Russian objections to Kosovo independence and to the Ahtisaari process in the UNSC had not been taken more seriously, and suggested that negotiations within the UNSC up to now had been merely "public relations." The only sustainable solution, according to Lancaric, could come from a "serious" negotiation yielding a UNSCR. He stressed that a "quick" solution is not necessarily a good one.

[¶3.](#) (C) MFA Balkan and CIS Director Stefan Rozkopal also stressed that an agreement was more important than adherence to a strict timeframe, but made clear that the issue should not "drag on." Rozkopal echoed Lancaric's comments on the need for a UNSCR, highlighting the implications for the EU presence in Kosovo that failure to achieve a resolution would pose. Rozkopal was not optimistic about the prospect for change in the positions of the parties, nor of the Russians.

[¶4.](#) (C) Rozkopal described the Serbian mood at Slovak-Serb bilateral meetings in Belgrade earlier this month as relaxed. From the Serbian perspective, according to Rozkopal, the Ahtisaari plan is dead; there will be no forcing actions in the next 120 plus days; and the Russians will continue to support them. He suggested, however, that Russia's participation in the troika could help facilitate a shift in the Russian approach, if not in its principles. As one of the "big three," Russia will play the most integral role yet in international efforts to broker a solution. If, as Rozkopal suspects, no agreement is reached by December, Russia will have to face reality and will have a harder time deflecting blame for the failure to find a solution. He doesn't expect the Russians to move on Kosovo, however, before the Presidential elections in March. In closing, Rozkopal offered to reinforce our messages in the region if it would be useful, including with the Macedonians (re: Albanian

population). He also asked that we convey the MFA's sincere appreciation for the assistance of US Office Pristina to the new Slovak liaison officer there. (Comment: While the GOS hasn't always played a helpful role on Kosovo, Slovak NGO's have made meaningful contributions. We will be meeting with key groups to learn more about their plans for the coming period, and to explore avenues for potential cooperation.

End comment)

SILVERMAN